



Kimberly A. Foster
Executive Director

LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

COMMISSIONERS:

CAROL O. BIONDI
PATRICIA CURRY
ANN FRANZEN, VICE CHAIR
SUSAN F. FRIEDMAN
HELEN A. KLEINBERG
DR. LA-DORIS MCCLANEY
REV. CECIL L. MURRAY
STEVEN M. OLIVAS, ESQ.
TINA PEDERSEN, LCSW
MARTHA TREVINO POWELL
SANDRA RUDNICK
STACEY SAVELLE, VICE CHAIR
ADELINA SORKIN, LCSW/ACSW, CHAIR
DR. HARRIETTE F. WILLIAMS
TRULA J. WORTHY-CLAYTON, VICE CHAIR

APPROVED MINUTES

The General Meeting of the Commission for Children and Families was held on Monday, **September 15, 2008**, in Room 739 of the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, 500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles. **Please note that these minutes are intended as a summary and not as a verbatim transcription of events at this meeting.**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT (Quorum Established)

Carol O. Biondi	Tina Pedersen
Patricia Curry	Sandra Rudnick
Ann Franzen	Stacey Savelle
Susan Friedman	Adelina Sorkin
Helen Kleinberg	Martha Trevino Powell
Rev. Cecil Murray	Dr. Harriette F. Williams
Steven M. Olivas, Esq.	Trula J. Worthy-Clayton

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT (Excused/Unexcused)

Dr. La-Doris McClaney

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Sorkin, Chair.

II. INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions of the audience were made.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Agenda for the September 15, 2008 meeting was unanimously approved.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes for the August 18, 2008 meeting were approved, with Ann Franzen abstaining.

V. CHAIR'S REPORT

Children's Planning Council (CPC) Reorganization

Chair Sorkin reported on a discussion with Sharon Watson, acting Executive Director, CPC. Due to budget cutbacks, CPC is decreasing the number of representatives on the Council and have recommended eliminating the Commission's seat on the Council. The Commission presented two options for ongoing inclusion and collaboration if the seat on the CPC is eliminated: 1) continue attending the meetings as the public, and 2) CPC can present updates periodically to the Commission. **Follow-Up:** Though Commissioner Sorkin's term has expired on the CPC, she will attend the next CPC meeting and report back to the Commission as to whether the recommendation to eliminate the Commission's seat is passed.

County of Los Angeles Commission, Committee and Board Authority Review – Draft Report - Response Letter to the Auditor-Controller

Chair Sorkin briefly provided an overview of the Auditor-Controller (A-C) County of Los Angeles Commission, Committee and Board Authority Review - Draft Report, which was previously distributed and reviewed by the Commissioners. The Chair identified two areas of concern in the report; first, the statement regarding the Commission's involvement with child fatality reviews; second, the recommendation for the Commission to report to the CEO. The Commissioners agreed to respond to the statements referencing: 1) the Commission being unclear as to its role in child death reviews, and 2) the Commission duplicating the child death review work of the Inter-Agency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect (ICAN).

A draft response letter was reviewed and changes were suggested. Commissioner Worthy-Clayton suggested using direct quotes from the report when stating which statements are inaccurate to strengthen the Commission letter and then giving examples as to why they are inaccurate. Commissioner Curry stressed that they should also review the section of the Commission's Annual Report referenced in order to properly respond to the inaccuracies in the A-C Report. **MOTION: Commissioner Savelle made a motion to approve the letter to the A-C in concept, Commissioner Rudnick seconded, motion carried with Commissioner Worthy-Clayton abstaining since she was not in agreement with the contents of the letter thus far.**

Chair Sorkin introduced Victoria Richardson, the new temporary contract employee in the Commission office. Mrs. Richardson responded with a warm greeting to the Commission.

VI. COMMITTEE REPORT

Presentation of 2008-2009 Commission Nomination Slate

Commissioner Trevino Powell thanked the Commissioners for their quick responses to her inquiries for nominations. She announced that Commissioner Sorkin has decided to run a second term for Chair; there is no opposition. The candidates for Vice Chair are: Commissioner Trish Curry, Commissioner Ann Franzen, Commissioner Steven Olivas, and Commissioner Tina Pedersen.

MOTION: A motion to accept the slate, as presented, was made by Commissioner Kleinberg, seconded by Commissioner Worthy-Clayton and unanimously carried.

Follow-Up: The election will be held at the next scheduled Regular Commission meeting on October 20, 2008.

Number of Commission Vice Chairs for 2008-2009

Commissioner Williams gave a brief review of the history of having either 2 or 3 Vice Chairs in the Commission. Historically, the Commission had 2 Vice Chairs. Previously, the Commission voted to have 3 Vice Chairs in order to encourage leadership, and allow all 3 nominees to serve. The discussion was to either return to 2 or remain at 3 Vice Chairs this year.

MOTION: A motion was made to return to 2 Vice Chairs this election by Commissioner Williams, seconded by Commissioner Worthy-Clayton and a vote was taken. There were 7 in favor, 6 opposed, with Commissioner Trevino Powell abstaining. **This motion was not carried, due to lack of a majority vote.**

Follow-Up: The issue of 2 or 3 vice chairs will be voted on at the Commission Retreat on October 6, 2008.

VII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

DCFS Chief Deputy Ted Myers gave the Director's Report in the absence of the Director, Trish Ploehn, who was attending the National Association of Child Welfare Administrators (NACWA) Conference in Washington, D.C. regarding the topic, Reaching Out to our Partners, Crossover Caseloads and Integrated Social Services. In addition, two of DCFS' managers, Emilio Mendoza, Mark Tine and Joy Russell were also attending NACWA. They were going to discuss how we're using data to reduce the foster care population and length of stay. Director Ploehn will also be attending the Urban Child Welfare leaders meeting in Denver. She is one of the speakers at this meeting. They will be discussing Disparity and Disproportionality in California.

Mr. Myers briefly discussed the Probation Department report, "Los Angeles County Juvenile Dependency and Delinquency Cross-Systems Involvement: Data Analysis", dated August 4, 2008. Commissioner Biondi recommended the Commission review and scrutinize the report, as 34% of the data may be unreliable. Commissioner Curry also expressed concerns with the data presented in the report as it is from a point in time and not ongoing. Follow-Up: The Commission office will obtain the report and e-mail it to all Commissioners for review.

Commissioner Sorkin asked about DCFS hiring Educational Consultants, as listed on the Board of Supervisors' Agenda for 9/16/08. Mr. Meyers informed the Commission that there are currently 14 Educational Consultants and liaisons from the School Board working collaboratively with the various departments within the County of Los Angeles to address problems relating to children moving between school districts and the inability to keep up with their records. Mr. Meyers stated the intent of the Department to convert these items to County positions. Commissioner Kleinberg identified the need for Early Childhood Development Specialists at DCFS.

VIII. PRESENTATION – DCFS

Psychotropic Medication

Dr. Sophy gave an overview/PowerPoint presentation of Child/Adolescent Psychiatry Overview of Diagnosis/Treatment. He explained what a Comprehensive Psychiatric Evaluation is and why certain cases require this type of evaluation. He further stated that 60-70% of the client population is receiving a comprehensive psychiatric evaluation. His training material has been built into the CORE Academy to ensure that Psychiatric and Clinical Providers are on board with this type of evaluation. The information ties into a comprehensive treatment/evaluation and the elements lend to a better standard of care. Dr. Sophy's presentation covered the following:

- The elements to a full comprehensive Psychiatric Evaluation
- How child psychiatry differs on an individual basis
- Disorders discussed include: Attention Deficit, Hyperactivity, Oppositional Defiant, Conduct, Anxiety, Bipolar, Depressive, Pervasive Development, Schizophrenia, and Tic Disorder.
- Medications and their side effects discussed include: Anti-depressant, Psychotropic, and Anti-psychotic medications.

Dr. Sophy explained that Children's Social Workers responsible for D-Rated cases will spend more time on these high-risk cases to navigate a treatment plan. Commissioner Sorkin asked about the status of linking aging out youth to SSI benefits, if they may be eligible. This was an issue the Commission addressed in the past when MacLaren Hall was open. A representative from the Alliance for Children's Rights commented that legislation is currently in effect that mandates DCFS to complete SSI assessments as part of their discharge and treatment plans. Dr. Sophy stated that they now have a unit that works collaboratively with the Alliance to ensure that SSI assessments are followed through. In addition, DCFS, on occasion, extends payments until the SSI applications are initiated.

Maureen Donohue –Watson, LCSW, Supervising Clinical Evaluator, D-Rate Program discussed the newly adopted concept of speaking directly to the children who have been placed on psychotropic medications and reviewed the flow chart on Psychotropic Medication Review and Monitoring Protocol. She explained that currently there are approximately 2,000 children placed in the D-Rate Program and 14 evaluators. In addition, there are five case workers from the Department of Mental Health working with the D-Rate evaluators. Ms. Watson explained that the D-Rate Evaluators are licensed mental health clinicians, who provide consultation and assist with navigation and linkage. If after this contact, further evaluation is necessary, they will facilitate the necessary clinical appointments, change in medications, treatment plan modifications, therapy, etc.

DCFS will be going to the Board of Supervisors on October 6, 2008 with the Psychotropic Medication Review and Monitoring Protocol.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENTS
None

XII. ADJOURN
Commission Chair Adelina Sorkin adjourned the meeting.